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ABSTRACT

It has long been recognized that childhood socialization occurs mainly through relationships with others, but only within the last decade or so can it be said that the study of relationships has become central to developmental psychology. As young children grow older, their sphere of relationships extends beyond the primary caretakers, and perhaps siblings, to others, i.e., other caregivers and other children. The child's relationships with these others are often based on the assumption that fundamental differences exist between parent-child and child-peer relationships. One major difference between these two types of relationships is the dimension of symmetry versus asymmetry. By definition, adult-child relationships are mainly asymmetrical while peer relationships are basically symmetrical. Generally, asymmetrical relationships are complementary and symmetrical relationships are reciprocal. Asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships constitute different socialization contexts, containing different developmental challenges for the growing child. It seems likely that the socialization of children within the context of both asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships fosters more successful outcomes than socialization in either context alone. In conclusion, implications of the discussion for practitioners (e.g., clinicians and educators) concerning the socialization and assessment of children are pointed out. (Author/RH)

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Symmetries and Asymmetries in Children's Relationships

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In all spheres, two types of relations must be distinguished: constraint and cooperation. The first implies an element of unilateral respect, of authority and prestige; the second is simply the intercourse between two individuals on an equal footing (Piaget, 1932, p. 53).

INTRODUCTION

Childhood socialization occurs mainly within relationships. This circumstance has long been recognized, but most theories of socialization have dealt with moment-to-moment experiences and their role in the integration of children into society. Child rearing practices have been examined and we have learned much about their efficacy in bringing about behavior change. But something is missing in our science, specifically, an accounting for the construction of relationships--those focussed, enduring interactions that extend through time and across situations and that dominate both children's minds and their emotions. Socialization is more than the acquisition of social skills, self-regulatory mechanisms, and social norms. Rather, socialization is the construction of relationships, within which the child adapts to the social world.

The construct of object relations has been around for a long time. Social attraction and close relationships have received much attention, over the years, from social psychologists and developmental psychologists alike. But, only

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within the last decade or so, can it be said that relationships have moved to center stage in developmental psychology. Owing largely to the theoretical work of Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1972) and to the empirical work of many younger investigators (Sroufe & Waters, 1977), the significance of relationships in child development is now vouchsafed.

To grant that socialization is the construction of relationships does not, perforce, solve the deepest mysteries of child development. Numerous writers (see Hinde, 1979) argue that we do not yet know the best ways to describe relationships, let alone understand their functions or dynamics; prediction and outcome remain shrouded in the developmental mists; causation and consequence are difficult to delineate. The next several decades, however, are certain to ameliorate this situation. Both basic and applied studies will increase and, by the year 2000, relationships and their role in child development will be better understood. New strategies for intervention within families, schools, and informal situations will be devised; in consequence, the lives of children everywhere will be bettered. Indeed, the bridge from today to tomorrow in paedology will largely be built on an improved understanding of relationships and their role in childhood socialization.

WHICH RELATIONSHIPS?

Which relationships must we know about? Many, obviously. Relationships with caregivers, teachers, siblings, and friends come immediately to mind. The first two or three years of the child's life actually involve the construction of a relatively small number of relationships: with a caregiver or two, with a sibling or two. Beginning with the preschool years, however, relationships are constructed with a widening circle of "significant others:" with other children and caregivers. The circumstances and timing governing the construction of these secondary relationships vary widely from culture to culture. Sometimes,

for example, babies are members of mixed-age enclaves containing children of a variety of ages and supervised by sibling caretakers; in other instances, contact with other children begins only in the third or fourth year of life. But none of the world's cultures stakes the future of its children exclusively on relationships with the primary caretaker.

Nevertheless, the nuclear family has been regarded as the preeminent socialization context because the child's earliest experiences occur within it and more time is consumed in family interaction than in interaction with other socialization agents. But to argue that family relationships are more important than peer relationships in the course of human development is a little like arguing that heredity is more important than environment in determinating individual differences in intelligence. In the same way that environmental action on biogenetic material is required for the emergence of intellectual abilities, socialization in a wider social world must occur in conjunction with socialization in the family. Family relations involve extended care and instruction, and go far toward producing a "caring" child and a semi-individuated "self." But the full realization of the child's potential is probably not possible without other relationships in which the main business consists of play and good times.

Some investigators (see Harlow & Harlow, 1965) have believed that the outcomes of experience within the family and peer systems are essentially distinct. For example, reproductive adequacy and adult effectiveness in parenting are believed to be traceable to early relations with the mother, whereas effectiveness in adult agemate relations is believed to be traceable primarily to early contact with peers. Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that adult-child and child-child relationships conjoin in the development of the socialized individual. Competencies deriving from peer interaction are not merely "added on" to the competencies deriving from earlier experience with caregivers; rather, new experiences are "layered over" old ones, significantly transforming

them. It is as meaningless to argue that the adult personality is more a reflection of family experience than a reflection of peer experience just as it is meaningless to argue that adult intelligence is more a reflection of heredity than of environment.

Implicit in these arguments is the assumption that fundamental differences exist in parent and peer relationships. In this presentation, I want to explore one major dimension -- symmetry vs. asymmetry. Here, symmetries refer to equivalences in status existing between two individuals; asymmetries, on the other hand, refer to non-equivalences existing between them. Equivalence and non-equivalence may be indexed in many ways: in developmental status (e.g., chronological age), in socio-demographic status (e.g., gender or race), in socio-cultural characteristics (e.g., in social norms), or in individual differences (e.g., in abilities, motives, or competencies).

By definition, then, adult-child relationships are mainly asymmetrical; peer relationships, on the other hand, are basically symmetrical. Certain features of the parent-child dyad can be symmetrical, of course, as when parent and child have the same gender. But asymmetries are the most salient features of adult-child relations: a) adults have a wide knowledge of the world: children struggle to attain this knowledge; b) adults have enormous competence for coping with problems and attaining their goals; children strive to achieve these competencies. Both in their understanding and coping with the world around them, an enormous gulf divides children and adults.

Nevertheless, non-equivalence does not set adults and children at cross-purposes. Rather, evolution has established one clear basis on which close relationships involving non-equivalent persons can be constructed -- namely, complementarity. One individual exercises constraint; the other is constrained. One individual controls: the other is controlled. One gives; the other takes. One teaches; the other learns.

Just as adult-child relations are not always asymmetrical, child-child relations are not always symmetrical. Equivalence in chronological age does not mean that children are necessarily equivalent in every attribute. Intellectual abilities, social skills, and motor skills vary enormously from child to child. Every student knows that chronological age is a "summary variable" and that individual scores on age-related traits vary around mean values. But agemate relations, by and large, are marked by an over-riding equivalence between the individuals in their knowledge of the world, their abilities to utilize information about it, and the manner in which affects are regulated.

Evolution has also established a basis for the construction of close relationships between equivalent individuals -- namely, similarity (reciprocity). Dominance is met with resistance; chase is met with chase; give-and-take is followed by take-and-give; sociable behavior is matched with sociable behavior. Within a symmetrical relationship, one individual does not invariably teach and one invariably learn. Rather, teacher and learner roles are passed back and forth.

Some child-child relations are more symmetrical than others. While it is customary to classify every contact that children make with other children as "peer" relations, it is obvious that interaction between children who differ in age will be more complementary than interactions between agemates. Indeed, complementarity in social relations will vary directly with the age difference existing between children while similarity or reciprocity in social interaction will vary inversely with this age difference.

In the remainder of this paper, we will document the thesis that children's relationships with adult associates are, indeed, more complementary than their relationships with child associates. Next, we will argue that asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships constitute different socialization contexts, containing different developmental challenges for the growing child. Finally, we

will argue that experiences within asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships, in fact, foster more successful outcomes than socialization in either context alone.

ADULTS ASSOCIATES AND CHILD ASSOCIATES

No one knows exactly when children begin to discriminate between adult associates and child associates. Children can distinguish between photographs of infants and photographs of adults when asked by an experimenter to "show me the baby" or "show me daddy" in the second year of life (Brooks & Lewis, 1978). Discrimination between "children" and "grownups" is evident between the ages of 3.5 and 5 years, although a distinction between "little children" and "big children" is not made reliably until the sixth year (Edwards & Lewis, 1979). Young children identify photographs of individuals who are older than 13 years as "grownups," and they cannot assign ages to these individuals. But broad categories of "adults" and "children" emerge early in conceptual development.

Behavioral differentiation with child and adult associates also occurs in early childhood. Several investigators have observed that babies react more positively to child strangers than to adult strangers (Lewis & Brooks, 1975; Greenberg, Hillman, & Grice, 1973). One team, for example, presented a total of 12 strange individuals (six adults and six 4-year-old children of both sexes), to 8- and 12-month-old infants, using an "affect scale" to rate the babies' responses. In both age groups, reactions were more positive to the child strangers than to the adult strangers. Why? Perhaps the adults were more intrusive and "scary" in their approach to the infants than were the young children. But, in other studies, an adult midget also evoked more positive reactions than a normal-sized adult. Do the results indicate a novelty effect? Certainly, most infants have been exposed less frequently to child-sized than to

adult-sized individuals. But, in these studies, familiar adults (e.g., mothers) actually evoked reactions that were even more positive than those evoked by the child strangers. Some investigators (cf., Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1972) have posited, then, that the positive reactions by babies to strange children are manifestations of an early internalized concept of self. A strange child, being more similar to this self-concept than a strange adult, would be expected to produce a more favorable reaction. But self-recognition (in mirror images) does not emerge until the second year, so that this kind of matching-to-sample seems beyond the cognitive capacities of the year-old infant. Alternatively, does the baby's reaction to strange children suggest a fixed-action pattern? We simply do not know. Nevertheless, these differentiations in the infant's reactions to strange adults and strange children suggest that unique elements are encompassed in adult-child and child-child interaction at an extraordinarly early age.

Other evidence that young children distinguish between adult and child associates emanates from observational studies contrasting reactions to mothers, strange women, and agemates. These studies are instructive because they show that interaction with adults and with agemates are both similar and different in content, that is, in what the individuals do together. Eckerman, Whatley, & Kutz (1975), for example, found that certain behaviors ordinarily occurring in interaction between 12- and 24-month old infants with their mothers, including smiling, vocalizing, and touching, also occurred with child associates, but not as frequently. "Distal reactions" (e.g., looking and vocalization) were more commonly directed to other babies; "proximal reactions" (e.g., touching) were more commonly directed to the mother (Vandell, Wilson, & Buchanan, 1980; Lewis, Young, Brooks, & Michalson, 1975).

Of considerable significance in these observations is evidence that interaction with toys occurred more frequently between the toddlers than between the children and their mothers (Eckerman, et al., 1975). Synchronous use of

play materials (e.g., give-and-take, struggles) was more common in exchanges with the other babies than in exchanges with the adults. Imitative use of these materials indicates that the child-child interaction was intrinsically "social" rather than a mere derivative of independent involvement with the toys. Observations of social interaction in day care centers (Eckerman, 1979) likewise confirms that play interactions occur more frequently between children than between caretakers and children.

Numerous studies show that early child-child interaction mainly consists of play whereas adult-child interaction mainly consists of caregiving and succorance. Among many monkey species, rough-and-tumble play (as well as certain other forms) occurs rarely between mothers and their offspring but, instead, occurs among the offspring themselves. Naturalistic observations of young children confirm these results in both Western and non-Western cultures (see Whiting, 1978). Mothers rarely engage in play with their children, except when other children are not available. Mostly, mothers are observers or play supervisors, exercising control over the situation rather than cooperation in it. Early on, then, relationships with adults and relationships with children become dimorphic, exactly as Piaget (1932) described; adult-child relationships are marked by constraint, child-child relationships by cooperation.

The beginnings of the dimorphism between adult-child and child-child relations can be traced to the mother. Comparative studies show that, although play overtures are sometimes made by their infant to the mother, under most conditions she rejects them. At the same time, the mother places herself and her infant in close proximity to other mothers and their infants. In due course, the infant's exploratory activity brings about social contact with other youngsters. Discovering that other youngsters make overtures as well as respond to them, the young monkey begins to play. But it is the mother who has bridged the gap between social worlds. She rejects or ignores one type of behavioral

content (play initiations) and, in turn, manages herself and her infant in such a way that these behaviors serve as a basis for commerce with an entirely new class of individuals -- namely, agemates.

Why does the mother constrain her relationship with the infant in this manner? We can only speculate. First, play interactions are incompatible with many maternal functions -- e.g., maintaining vigilance against environmental dangers, providing nourishment to the infant, and maintaining cleanliness. (Have you ever attempted to change the diaper of a year-old baby who wants to play?) But more subtle constraints may also limit the extent to which mothers can "play." For example, equivalent or near-equivalent cognitive and social status among the participants may be a necessary condition for sustaining this activity. At the same time, adults are aware of the many inequivalences between themselves and their children, both cognitively and socially. In essence, this argument proposes that adults cannot play with their children to the extent that the child's needs demand. Play interferes with adult caretaking functions and, in any case, the adult is "over-qualified" for this purpose. Thus, play becomes more than the hallmark of peer relations; it is their raison d'etre.

Stress also elicits different reactions to adults and to children, although evidence on this issue is scarce. Both the non-human and human primate literatures indicate that, in strange situations, young children seek proximity with the mother. Distress reactions diminish after a period of clinging and looking at the fear-arousing object; exploration then increases. When no mother or mother-surrogate is available, however, distress remains intense and exploration continues to be suppressed (Harlow & Zimmermann, 1959; Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969). Only one experiment has been conducted in which fear-producing stimuli were presented when the youngster could choose between proximity to a familiar adult (the mother) or a familiar peer (Patterson, Bonvillian, Reynolds, & Maccoby, 1975). In this instance, proximity to the mother increased but proxi-

mity to the peer did not. Casual observation suggests, too, that the occurrence of hurt or fear rarely sends a child to another child for purposes of comfort but, rather, to the mother or teacher. Proximity-seeking elicited by stress is thus another activity that differentiates adult-child and child-child relationships. Note, once more, that the behaviorial content with adults is complementary: the fearful child seeks security; the adult gives it.

Further differentiation between adult-child and child-child relationships occurs in the preschool years. The documentation is not extensive, but the affective concomitants of these relationships are not the same. For example, different actions are used to express affection toward other children and toward adults. Children follow one another around, engage each other in conversation, and sometimes share. (Note the symmetrical reciprocity in these interactions.) Affectionate behavior (either physical or verbal) occurs infrequently. Similarly, children rarely cry or fuss in the absence of another child. Separation from a longtime friend may prompt questions and concern, but severe stress reactions are reserved for separations from adults. Children do not engage in intensive clinging, hugging, or other forms of ventral-ventral contact with their peers, unlike their contacts with adults. Only among animals who have been socialized exclusively with other young animals in "motherless" conditions is intense clinging seen among them; even these contacts are likely to be dorsal-ventral rather than ventral-ventral (Harlow, 1969). Seemingly, then, proximity-seeking, clinging, and intense physical contact is reserved by children for their interactions with adults, unless adults have not been salient in their earlier socialization.

Children are aware of the content differences marking parent and peer relations. Using incomplete stories, with which preschool-aged children were asked to attribute social functions to either child or adult dolls, Edwards and Lewis (1979) found that "help" was more frequently ascribed to adults than to

agemates. "Play," on the other hand, was ascribed to agemates more commonly than to adults. Thus, at the time that interpersonal awareness is beginning to emerge, children's understanding of adult-child relationships already involves complementaries (i.e., "help") whereas their understanding of child-child relationships involves symmetrical reciprocities (i.e., "play.")

By middle childhood, the differentiation in content between adult-child relations and peer relations has become clearly evident both cognitively and socially. Observations conducted in the United States three decades ago reveal these distinctions. Barker and Wright (1955) observed children in a small midwestern town, obtaining complete records of social interaction occurring over an entire day. First, the children were observed to be active social agents, initiating interaction with adults in the same proportion as with child associates. But the content of the interaction differed according to the status of the associate. Children's modal actions toward adults consisted mainly of appeals and submission; the modal actions of adults toward the children consisted of dominance and nurturance. Thus, adult-child interactions in "Midwest" were concentrated on two complementary issues: a) the child's dependency, and b) the adult's need to control the child. The most common actions of children with child associates, however, were sociability, dominance, and resistance. Child-child interaction was thus concentrated on two symmetrical issues: a) assertiveness/aggression; and b) sociability.

Cross-cultural observations (Edwards & Whiting, 1977; Whiting & Whiting, 1975) confirm these results. A nurturance/dependency complementarity exists in nearly every culture in adult-child interaction (although also in interactions between older children and infants). Dominance/submission interactions occur in both adult-child and child-infant interactions. Neither nurturance/dependency or dominance/submission, however, constitute the main content of peer interaction. Between children, sociable, pro-social, and aggressive interac-

tions predominate. Universally, then, the peer system does not seem to duplicate the parent-child system in content. Moreover, these variations in content also constitute variations in symmetry.

The most comprehensive studies dealing with children's understanding of adult-child and peer relations were conducted recently by Youniss (1980). Children were asked to tell stories about two individuals (either children of the same age or a child and an adult), in which one person did something kind or unkind to the other person. Children between the ages of 6 and 13 were interviewed with these results: First, most of the stories generated by younger children about child-child interaction were centered on sharing and playing; the relationships exemplified direct, symmetrical reciprocity. Possessions were described as shared; activities were described as occurring "together." Second, between 8 and 10 years, two elements were added in the children's conceptualizations of peer relations: a) equivalence and reciprocity were seen as the foundations of enduring relationships, and b) the children understood that individualized personalities are involved. Non-equivalences between the actors in these stories were often mentioned, but the social exchange between them was clearly predicated on the children's beliefs that the individuals should be treated equally. Third, kindness consisted of peer actions that supported the symmetry of the relationship; concommitantly, unkindness was understood to consist of actions creating or maintaining asymmetry. Social reasoning, then, extends from the child's notions that peer relations are constituted in terms of metrical reciprocity rather than in terms of asymmetrical complementarity.

The adult-child stories told by the children in this investigation were very different. First, the content universally emphasized complementarity rather than symmetrical reciprocity. Child actors were generally described as doing what the adults asked them to do; the child actor's initiatives usually emanated from the wishes of the adult actors and children were described as

recipients of adult actions rather than vice versa. Clearly, the storytellers viewed children and adults as nonequals. In the descriptions of peer relationships by older children, there was evidence that "self" and "other" were seen as an intimate we; this mutuality and intimacy, however, were not notable in the descriptions of adult-child relationships. Second, the children's notions about adult-child relations did not include views of themselves as "oppressed" or views of adults as "authoritarian ogres." Third, kindness in these stories did not consist of actions that would reduce the asymmetry between the actors. To the contrary, kindness consisted of actions supporting the basic complementarity of the relationship. That is, kindness consisted of children being obedient or conforming to adult demands; kindness also consisted of adults doing favors for a child, granting privileges, or giving assistance. "This method of reciprocity involves the exchange of unlike acts and implies an adjustment to the fact that children and adults are not equals. Adults know more, possess more resources, and have rights which children do not have. (Youniss, 1980, p. 83)."

Recent investigations thus support the thesis that enduring childhood relationships between nonequals function on the basis of complementarity while those between equals function on the basis of symmetrical reciprocity. Emerging in the first two years, and continuing throughout childhood, these two kinds of relationships differ greatly in terms of content. Symmetries and asymmetries in content constitute a major differences between parent and peer relations.

SYMMETRIES AND ASYMMETRIES WITH CHILD ASSOCIATES

Same-age vs. mixed age interaction. The peer system includes children of a wide variety of ages. Consequently, behavior differentiation according to the age of children's associates should be evident at many different levels of analysis. Indeed, preschool children use categorical boundaries like "big boy"

to distinguish older children from "a boy like you" or "a baby boy" (Edwards & Lewis, 1979). Not only are dolls and photographs appropriately labelled with terms like these, but different functions are attributed to these individuals. "Helping" is more often ascribed to older children than to agemates and almost never to younger children, "demonstration" and "sharing" are discriminated in the same manner; "play" is more often associated with agemate than mixed-age interaction.

Cross-cultural observations are concordant with these results: a) help-giving and sympathy occur in nearly every culture most frequently among children in interaction with younger children, especially babies; b) seeking assistance and other dependent behaviors are most commonly directed by children to associates who are older than themselves; and c) both sociable acts and aggression are more common among children who are similar in chronological age than among children who differ in age by more than a year or two (Whiting & Whiting, 1975). In general, then, the dependency/control complementarity dominates nonagemate interaction in a manner that is similar to the child's interactions with adults. Sociable/aggression symmetries, however, dominate agemate interaction. Since the observations included children of a wide variety of ages (including babies), the child's experience with other children subsumes both symmetry and asymmetry from very early in life.

The mixed-age situation is marked by asymmetries in interpersonal attitudes as well as in social interaction. In one study (Graziano, Musser, & Brody, 1980), first- and third-grade children were asked to attribute trait names to children identified as two years older, the subject's own age, or two years younger. More positive traits (e.g., "best," "stronger," "smart," "fast") were attributed to older children than to either same-age or younger children. More negative traits (e.g., "dumb," "worst," "silly," "weak") were assigned to younger children than to same-age or older children. In this instance, the

social desirability of many trait names was confounded with age-related abilities, increasing the likelihood that positive traits would be more readily assigned to older than to younger associates. But certain negative attributes were positively related to peer age ("mean," "bossy," and "show-off") indicating that social desirability does not account for the entire results. Rather, it seems that power-related attributes are the ones most likely to be assigned differentially according to relative age, exactly those attributes that establish complementarity in social relations rather than reciprocities of similarity.

Age differences of a year or two generally produce spontaneous accomodations that increase the symmetry of the social exchange. Four-year olds thus use shorter and less complex utterances when they talk to 2-year olds than when they talk to other 4-year olds (Shatz & Gelman, 1973). Four-year olds also make finely-tuned adjustments in their conversations with 2-year olds according to individual differences among the latter; that is, longer utterances and more complex syntactic structures are directed toward responsive 2-year old companions than toward less responsive ones (Masur, 1978). Although these adjustments may not be as finely-tuned among very young children as among older ones, various studies show that even 3-year olds use more mature communications with 5-year olds than with other 3-year olds (Lougee, Grueneich & Hartup, 1977). Whether age differences greater than one or two years elicit similar adjustments is not known.

Other evidence suggests that children can cross a considerable communication gap between themselves and other children as long as the situation is structured in complementary terms. When asked to teach another child a game, for example, school children will simplify and expand the strategies used with children two and four years younger than themselves (Ludeke, 1978). The extent to which a complementary role relation (e.g., teacher/learner) must exist in order for these accomodations to be made, however, is not known.

Same-sex vs. mixed-sex interaction. The weight of the evidence indicates that social interaction is more symmetrical between children of the same sex than between children of the opposite sex. Jacklin and Maccoby (1978) studied three-year-old children who were not well-acquainted with one another. Few differences were evident between boy-boy and girl-girl dyads but more social activity, both positive and negative, was directed toward same-sex partners than toward opposite-sex partners. Girls were more passive in the presence of boys than in the presence of girls, indicating a basic complementarity in interaction in the cross-sex situation, although the corresponding difference was not as evident among the boys. Similar results were obtained in other studies of well-acquainted children (Langlois, Gottfried, & Seay, 1973). Smiling, talking, non-word verbalizations, and body contact among five-year-old children were more common in same-sex pairs than in opposite sex pairs. Aggression occurred more frequently in the same-sex than in the opposite-sex condition, indicating that sociableness, in general, varied according to gender equivalence. A greater symmetry thus seems evident in same-sex interaction than in opposite-sex interaction.

Same-race vs. mixed-race interaction. Not much attention has been given to mixed-race interaction as compared to same-race interaction. Nevertheless, Harrison, Messe, and Stollak (1971) observed that, among elementary school children in the United States, social interaction (both positive and negative) was initiated less frequently in 4-person mixed-race situations than in same-race ones. Individual responsiveness to initiations from the other children also was lower in the mixed-race groups than in the homogeneous ones. Since no differences were evident between the homogeneous black and white aggregates, symmetrical reciprocities in the same-race situation exceeded those observed in the mixed-race one.

In other studies, one can detect indications that the mixed-race situation among American children may actually be associated with complementarity in social relations. For example, Cohen (1972) found that, among young adolescent males, whites were more likely to initiate social interaction than blacks in mixed-race situations and to have a greater influence over final decisions, especially when the decisions were contested. And, in at least one investigation with Mexican-American, black, and Anglo-American children, cooperation was observed more commonly in similar ethnic pairs than in dissimilar pairs (Manning, Pierce-Jones, and Parelman, 1974). Even though this evidence is not extensive, it is consistent; no results indicate greater symmetry in mixed-race interaction than in same-race interaction. Once again, nonequivalence within child-child relations seems to encourage the formation of complementary roles and social exchanges; equivalence, on the other hand, encourages symmetrical reciprocities.

Friends vs. nonfriends. Status equivalencies are maximized among children and their friends. First, within school systems, the ages of children and their friends are positively correlated. Within classrooms these concordances may be relatively modest owing to the small range in age in most of them (Challman, 1932); across classes, however, these concordances are considerable. Among high school students, similarity estimates among friendship dyads are .84 and .64 for grade and age, respectively (Kandel, 1978b). Second, a strong tendency exists throughout childhood and adolescence for friends to be of the same sex. Mixed-sex "best friends" are extremely rare (Duck, 1975) and the gender concordance in adolescent friendships is .81 (Kandel, 1978b). Third, the ethnic concordance in adolescent studies is .66 (Kandel, 1978b), indicating the salience of racial similarity in friendship relations. Overall, the status equivalencies appearing among children and their friends are exactly as the theory of symmetricality in peer relations would predict.

Behavior equivalencies among friends are somewhat attenuated, being more extensive in regard to specific behaviors (e.g., drug use among adolescents) than in regard to personality factors and social competencies. Concordances in these latter attributes are more modest. Qualitative differences, however, can be observed between interaction occurring among friends and interaction occurring among nonfriends. Furman and Masters (1980) classified social interactions among preschool children according to three categories: a) positive reinforcement (given and received); b) neutral actions (given and received); and c) punishment (given and received). Contrasts between the children's contacts with friends, with disliked children, and with "nominal others" revealed that children gave and received more positive reinforcements and neutral behaviors with their friends than with disliked or unselected children; these differences, however, did not extend to punishment interactions. Other accounts have shown that more generosity and sharing occurs among preschool-aged friends than among acquaintances (Anderson, 1939), consistent with the more recent results.

Studies with elementary school children are consistent with the studies of preschool children except that friendship interaction more clearly incorporates cooperation and mutuality. In an early investigation (Philp, 1940), friends were observed to be more cooperative, noisier, and more arousing in their interactions than non-friends; two modes of interaction characterized non-friends -- indifference and bored silence, or poking fun, showing off, and behaving competitively. Recent micro-analytic studies elaborate these results. Newcomb, Brady, and Hartup (1979) observed 6- and 8-year old children performing a block-building task under competitive and cooperative conditions with friends and acquaintances ("nominal others"). Friends were more interactive, more affective, paid closer attention to equity rules ("If we take turns we'll both make more points"), and their conversations were mutually-directed rather than

other-directed ("Let's do it this way" vs. "Put your block over there"). In a second investigation, similar differences were observed in an exploratory task (Newcomb, 1979). In this instance, interaction between friends was more synchronous, affectively-tuned, and mutually-directed than the behavior of non-friends, and also involved more extensive exploration of the materials and the acquisition of more information about them.

Social interaction among elementary school children in "fun situations" also differs between friends and non-friends (Foot, Chapman, & Smith, 1977). When children watched cartoons or listened to humorous records, both the duration and frequency of laughing, smiling, looking, and talking were greater between friends than between strangers. In addition, response matching, (a measure of behavior symmetry) occurred more frequently between friends than between non-friends (Smith, Foot & Chapman, 1977). Overall, then, young children more commonly engage in concrete reciprocities (e.g., sharing) with their friends than with others. By middle childhood, these reciprocities are embedded in cooperation, mutually-directed communication, and smoother synchronizations in problem-solving.

Friendships begin, endure, and end; these relationships cycle through time. Do status equivalencies and behavioral symmetries determine the selection of one's friends? Do similarities maintain these relationships over time? Or, are similarities the outcomes of friendship interaction? Correlational studies do not separate selection effects from socialization effects since coefficients of concordance are based on one-time assessments. Longitudinal studies are required to establish the extent to which friendship formation brings about increases in symmetrical reciprocities.

Familiarization experiences, even among babies, increase contact and certain reciprocities in their interaction. Proximal exchanges, for example, become more common as the familiarity between children increases; gesturing and

imitative interactions, too (Young & Lewis, 1979). Similar evidence can be obtained from observations of preschool children. With increasing acquaintance, social contact and "connected" interactions become more frequent; play interactions are more cognitively mature (Doyle, Connolly, & Rivest, 1980). Among elementary school children, initially strangers, verbal interaction increases and problem-solving activity becomes better "meshed" as they become familiar with one another (Brody, Graziano, & Musser, 1980). Whether these outcomes are "mere exposure effects" or the consequences of the social contacts among the children is not entirely clear. Nevertheless, familiarization generates increasing symmetries among children who interact with one another over time. New studies also indicate that these symmetries may serve as a basis for generating more intimate reciprocities. For example, Furman and Childs (1981) report that social interactions among newly-acquainted "friends" in a summer camp were characterized, first, by increasing mutuality and, second, by increasing candor and self-disclosure.

Does similarity between two individuals affect <u>both</u> friendship selection and friendship outcome? Longitudinal studies of adolescents (Kandel, 1978a) suggest that the answer is "yes." Three types of dyads were compared in terms of demographic and behavioral concordances at the beginning and the end of the school year: a) friendship pairs remaining stable over time; b) those that dissolved over time; and c) children who were not initially friends but who became friends by the end of the year. The significance of similarity in the <u>selection</u> of friends was indicated by: a) the greater similarity in behavior and attitudes at the beginning of the year between children who subsequently remained friends than between children who did not; b) the lesser similarity in the beginning between children who did not remain friends over time than between children who became friends subsequently; and c) the lesser similarity at the end of the year between former friends than between children who remained

friends over the entire time. Socialization effects, on the other hand, were revealed by: a) the greater similarity between stable friends at the end of the year than at the beginning; and b) the greater similarity among newly formed friends at the end of the year than was the case between these children at the beginning. Similarity between friends, then, cannot be attributed entirely to mutual influences of one friend on another, but rests also on assortative processes. Kandel's (1978a) work indicates that these occurrences are especially important in adolescent drug use, although both selection and socialization symmetries were also evident in education aspirations, political orientation, and minor delinquencies. Strong evidence exists, then, to support the thesis that status equivalencies establish symmetries rather than complimentaries in social interaction and, over time, these symmetries between children and their friends increase still further.

SOCIALIZATION IN ASYMMETRICAL AND SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Socialization and adult-child relations. What are the major contributions of adult-child relations to the growth of social competence? First, one must consider the content of the social exchange -- the things that children and adults do with one another. Second, one must consider the developmental status of the child. Control and constraint may characterize adult-child relations at all ages, but the complementarities existing between adults and infants may not be the same as those between adults and older children.

During the first six months or so, the content of adult-child relations can best be described as "caregiving." Most salient are the adult's needs to protect the infant, feed it, and maintain control over homeostatic mechanisms. The infant must be predisposed to accept the adult's nurturance, and most babies are. Early complementarities also include communication. Controlled mostly by the mother, "conversations" occur in modes as various as vocalization, visual

contact, touching, and kinaesthesis (Brown & Bakeman,). For example, mothers "match" the infant's actions (e.g., talk in response to the infant's vocalizations) and "prompt" others (e.g., moving the infant's hands through a game of "pat-a-cake").

Recent research demonstrates that differences exist among mothers and their infants in the smoothness of these complementary exchanges with some seeming "troubled" from the beginning. Some mothers seem insensitive; some infants, on the other hand, resist or ignore the overtures of their caregivers. Most authorities believe that effective complementarities need to be established early in the interaction between caregivers and their babies, and we are beginning to understand some of the conditions that trouble them -- e.g., father absence, poverty and worry, sickness and disability. More needs to be known, however, about the conditions that interfere with smooth complimentarities in early care.

Somewhat later, these complementarities become integrated into an attachment system. First, mother-infant attachments, including their communicative and affective elements, continue to include caregiving interactions. Second, the complementarity now encompasses new content -- the mother becomes a "secure base" for the child's explorations of the environment. Third, the child's tie to the mother constitutes a basis for the complementarity of instruction.

These early complementarities constitute the means through which the child learns the basic invariants of the social world. Using many techniques, including explanation and example, the adult teaches the child the ways of the world. Mothers modify their messages and attenuate their demands according to the needs of the child and the necessities of the situation. But most of the modifications in these exchanges involve the child's actions. By and large, adults renounce very little and learn very little from the child in the course of these interactions. Moreover, these instructional complementarities are

maintained for many years since children are vastly ignorant and adults are vastly wise.

What mechanisms are contained in the complementary exchange that "socialize" the child? Our observations indicate that adult-child complementarities consist mainly of conformity by the child which is exchanged for approval by the adult (Youniss, 1980). Adults evaluate their children's actions, approving certain acts and not others. These evaluator and evaluatee roles are universally thought to be natural and right. Adults do not assume that children can learn the invariants of the social world on their own, through trial and error. Rather, adults know that their responsibilities toward their children include instruction. We may ensure that our children are exposed to other socialization agents, including school teachers and other children, but our own evaluations are essential elements in socialization. Constraints suffuse our actions toward our children; conformities suffuse their actions toward us.

Maturity does not eliminate constraint and control from social relations. In a constantly changing world, the individual must maintain numerous complementary relationships to ensure success in subsistence and reproduction. Childhood complementarities, then, emerge as "means" as well as "ends." Through complementary exchanges, children acquire essential skills and knowledge. In addition, these exchanges contain phototypic elements found also in complementary exchanges at maturity: e.g., interactions with one's own children, one's employers, and members of the political system.

Socialization and child-child relations. Many writers have understood that a construction of reality based only on the complementarity of conformitys and constraint constitutes a narrow view of the world. Most significantly, a complementary view of the world omits cooperation and the understanding that one's own views can be transformed into those of other individuals and back again (Youniss, 1980). As Piaget (1932) noted fifty years ago, symmetrical

social relations are needed by the child for the purpose of expanding the child's construction of reality to include cooperation and an understanding that social contracts can be mutually generated. Socialization must include experience in the mutual construction of social norms and the mutual regulation of affect. Concession must not always be exchanged for succorance but, rather, concession must sometimes be exchanged for concession, resistance exchanged for resistance. Recall that observational studies show these exact symmetries to be most common in child-child relations. Sociableness and aggression are the universal hallmarks of agemate interaction.

Individuation thus may begin within an asymmetrical context but must be augmented within symmetrical experiences in order to create the mature individual. Empirical investigations are consistent with these "conjunctive" notions. For example, secure attachments in the first year are associated with effectiveness in problem-solving in the second year (Matas, Arend, & Sroufe, 1978) as well as with effectiveness in peer relations in the nursery school years (Waters, Wippman & Sroufe, 1979). Poor parent-child relations may not doom the child to school failure, criminality, and emotional disturbance but family disturbances are commonly associated with poor developmented outcomes (Rutter, in press). Child-child relations are also associated with mental health status and a variety of adolescent and adult outcomes (Hartup, in press). Causal connections are not easy to establish, but the associations between the child's effectiveness in asymmetrical as well as symmetrical relations, on the one hand, and good developmental outcome, on the other, are compelling.

IMPLICATIONS

These arguements contain many implications for practitioners. First, the prevention of developmental disorders involves an assurance that asymmetrical and symmetrical relationships both run smoothly and appropriately according to

the child's developmental status. Neither asymmetries nor symmetries should be aversive and ungratifying; neither should exploit the individuals involved. To be sure, tensions and troubles occur within good relationships as well as poor ones. But children's relationships -- with caregivers and with friends -- must be marked by minimized disharmonies and maximized effectiveness in coping with stress and challenge.

Second, symmetries and their importance in childhood socialization must not be overlooked. Stereotypes about these symmetries must be corrected. Child-child relations do not contain the seeds of social discord nor foster untoward individualism. When children begin to teach one another, the teaching of parents is not undetermined. Adults maintain considerable control over the peer system, especially children's access to it, so we must be cautious about the manner in which this control is exercised. To insist that peer socialization be a normative extension of adult-child socialization is not only useless, it is dangerous. Child-child relations cannot be orderly; these relationships are naturally disorderly. Moreover, their value to children is contained in this seeming chaos. Our objectives, then, should include assistance to children in obtaining the skills and the self-esteem necessary for maintaining themselves within this disorder evidencing minimum anxiety, increasing cooperation, and growing intimacy with other children.

Intervention strategies are available in many different models. Clinicians and educationists have been inventive; our technological cupboard is not bare. But the main implications of my remarks are straightforward: a) socialization occurs within relationships, and b) symmetries and asymmetries in relationships are important considerations in both evaluation and intervention. Recognizing the constraints existing in adult-child relations and the reciprocities existing in child-child relations is essential in both assessing social development and intervening in it.

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